



GET INVOLVED!

- Sign up for newsletter.
- Contact us for consulting assistance.
- Go to the [Engage R1](#) webpage to see project updates and provide feedback.
- **Volunteer opportunities to plant at Park-er-Woods will be made available in the Spring of 2025**

EXCITING NEWS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY!

Farmers, ranchers, and agricultural innovators, the time has come to elevate our practices and embrace **Best Management Practices (BMPs)** to ensure a sustainable agriculture and improve water quality.

What are BMPs?

Best management practices (BMPs) are methods of managing stormwater runoff and mitigating pollution entering waterways by controlling peak stormwater runoff rate, improving water quality, and managing runoff volume.

Source: Water Resources Center Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

AN AGRICULTURAL BMP



Riparian buffers and cattle fencing protect rivers and streams from pollution runoff. Photo by Hugh Kenney

Riparian Buffers and cattle fencing protect rivers and streams from pollution runoff.

Image Source: Virginia Conservation Network. Photo Credit: Hugh Kenney

UPCOMING EVENTS



Dates TBD

Park-Er-Woods Planting Installation

Planting native vegetation at Park-Er-Woods project site. New dates coming soon. Sign up to volunteer for this planting event using the volunteer sign up link above!

START YOUR RAIN GARDEN TODAY - WE ARE HERE TO HELP!



Image Source: Alliance for the Cheapeake Bay

A number of people have reached out for consulting assistance to install rain gardens! Do you have a property and require additional help with evaluating potential BMP improvements? Technical assistance is available from staff of Olson Ecological Solutions. For more information, or to schedule a consultation, please contact Program Outreach Coordinator Estelle Adiaba (eadiaba@r1planning.org) so that she can assist with determining eligibility. For

more information, visit
the [Engage R1 Page](#)

QUESTIONS? **CONTACT**

Estelle Adiaba

Outreach Coordinator

eadiabaa@r1planning.org

For more information, visit
project website: [Engage R1](#)

UNLOCK THE **EXPERIENCE: JOIN** **OUR SITE TOUR**



Join R1 and partners on a tour and information session of the best management practice (bioretention basin) installed at Ken Rock Park. Come see how the plant plugs will, in time, bloom to beautify the location, sleeping in the first year, creeping in

the next year, and leaping to full bloom within the next three years.

Contact Program Outreach Coordinator Estelle Adiaba (eadiab@r1planning.org) for more information and to schedule a tour.

Want to know more? Schedule an Informative Session on Water Quality Improvement, Non point Source Pollution - Perfect for Small and Large Groups.



Whether you have a small or large group, be it an HOA, church or school, organize a session with us to learn about water quality and nonpoint source pollution – we're happy to come to you and share our expertise. Sign up [here](#).

SELECTED AGRICULTURAL BMPs



Photo of strip till (left) and chisel plow (right) strips for on-farm research. Credit: Aaron Daigh



Picture 2 source: Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

Picture 1 (Left) Conservation Tillage:

Conservation tillage is an agricultural management approach that aims to minimize the frequency or intensity of tillage operations in an effort to promote certain economic and environmental benefits.

These include a decrease in carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions, less reliance on farm machinery and equipment, and an overall reduction in fuel and labor costs. In addition, conservation tillage methods have been shown to improve soil health, reduce runoff, and limit the extent of erosion.

Source: Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program

Picture 2 (Right) Cover and Green Manure Crop:

A cover crop is any crop grown to cover the soil and may be incorporated into the soil later for enrichment. Planting cover crops in your garden provides multiple benefits such as controlling erosion, suppressing weeds, reducing soil compaction, increasing moisture and nutrient content of soil, improving yield potential,

attracting pollinators, and providing habitat for beneficial insects and wildlife as well as food to animals.

Source: U.S Department of Agriculture



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

Picture 1 Source: United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Part 650 Engineering Field Handbook

Picture 1 (Left) Grassed Waterway

A shaped or graded channel that is established with suitable vegetation to convey surface water at a nonerosive velocity using a broad and shallow cross section to a stable outlet. This practice is used to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

1. Convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations without causing erosion or flooding.
2. Prevent gully formation.
3. Protect/improve water quality.

Source: USDA

Picture 2 (Right) Filter Strips

A filter strip is a narrow band of grasses, legumes, and forbs used to limit sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other contaminants from entering water bodies. In addition, filter strips can provide valuable winter cover, nest sites, nectar and pollen for pollinating insects, and food for wildlife.

Source: USDA



Grass-lined channel in a construction area.
Credit: Anthony D'Angelo for USEPA, 2017



Picture 2 Source: USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Services Illinois

Picture 1 (Left) Grass Lined Channels:

A grass-lined channel is a graded, vegetated channel that collects and conveys stormwater while encouraging infiltration into the ground. Vegetation lining the channel slows down concentrated flow.

Picture 2 (Right) Permanent Vegetative Cover

This process entails establishing permanent vegetative cover to stabilize disturbed or exposed areas. The purposes of this practice are to:

1. Permanently stabilize disturbed or exposed areas in a manner that adapts to site conditions and allows selection of the most appropriate plant materials.
2. Reduce erosion and sedimentation from such areas; and
3. Create a landscape that enhances soil permeability and the filtering of runoff pollutants, while improving water quality and wildlife habitat.

WETLANDS



Picture Source: NC Wetlands

An artificial wetland ecosystem with hydrophytic vegetation ("water loving" vegetation, plants which have adapted to growing in the low-oxygen (anaerobic) conditions associated with prolonged saturation or flooding) for biological treatment of water.

This practice is used to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

1. Treat wastewater or contaminated runoff from agricultural processing, livestock, or aquaculture facilities.
2. Improve water quality of storm water runoff, tile drainage outflow, or other waterflows.

Source: Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education,

United States Department of Agriculture

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



The Rockford Township Highway Department, with over 280 lane miles of road is the largest Township Highway Department in the State of Illinois. We are responsible for the maintenance of the roads and right of ways on these various roads throughout the unincorporated areas of Rockford, Loves Park, Cherry Valley, and New Milford. We are proud to partner with the Region 1 Planning Council on the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Grant. The partnership with not only Region 1 Planning but Winnebago County, Rockford Park District, Winnebago Soil and Water, and Rockford Public Library creates a great outreach audience to better understand the importance of water quality and nonpoint source pollution (NPS) control in the region. The Township provided in-kind services in both the Park-er-Woods Bioswale project that feeds into the south fork of Kent Creek and the Ken Rock project that is in the Buckbee Creek Watershed. These projects are great opportunities to highlight BMPs to stakeholders that will improve NPS pollution in priority watersheds and engage in outreach best practices through implementing components of two IEPA approved Watershed Based Management plans.

This newsletter was prepared using United States Environmental Protection Agency funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act distributed through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The findings and recommendations contained herein are not necessarily those of the funding agencies.



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<https://engager1.mysocialpinpoint.com/watershed-education-outreach>

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